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ABSTRACT

This booklet summarizes the activities of Reading Recovery programs in North America for the period 1984 to 1993. The first section of the booklet provides an overview of the program, presents a typical Reading Recovery lesson, and discusses professional staff development in Reading Recovery. The second section considers whether Reading Recovery works, including research and data collection and what program participants say. The third section discusses implementing the program at the district level and models of implementation. Two tables and one figure of data are included. Contains 42 references. (RS)

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The Executive Summary

1984 to 1993

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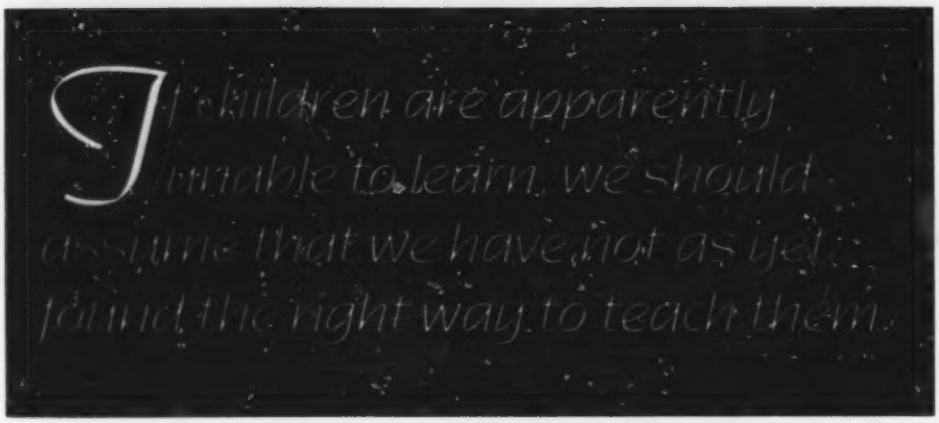

The Reading Recovery Executive Summary is published annually by The Reading Recovery Program at The Ohio State University.

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Reading Recovery is a National Diffusion Network Developer/ Demonstrator Project.

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A Reading Recovery child begins a new lesson with her teacher

What is Reading Recovery?

Program Overview

It hardly seems possible that a six- or seven-year-old could be at risk of failure, but that is exactly what happens to some first graders. They experience confusion, frustration, and anxiety over something that is fairly natural for most children: learning how to read. In a few short but critical months, educational life passes them by, and they begin a pattern of thinking that tells them they can't be successful in school. Many of these "at-risk" children quickly fall behind their classmates and require expensive long-term remedial help. Some never learn to read.

Program for Children

Reading Recovery stops the clock for at-risk children by giving them a chance to succeed before they enter this cycle of failure. Children are selected for the program based on authentic measures of assessment and teacher judgement. Their regular classroom instruction is then supplemented with daily, 30-minute, one-to-one lessons with a specially trained teacher for 12-20 weeks.

The lessons consist of a variety of reading and writing experiences designed to help children develop effective strategies for reading and writing. Instruction continues until the child can read at or above the class average *and can continue to learn without later remedial help*. The student is then "discontinued" from the program, providing the opportunity for another child to become an independent reader.

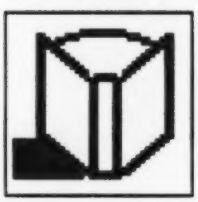
Over 150,000 children have benefited from Reading Recovery since its introduction to North America in 1985. Almost 85% of the children who have completed a Reading Recovery program have become independent readers. Longitudinal studies conducted in New Zealand and the United States show that Reading Recovery helps a large majority of low-progress readers to achieve continued reading success.

Program for Educators

The remarkable progress that children make in Reading Recovery demonstrates that reading failure is not a foregone conclusion for at-risk students. The key to success for such children is specialized teaching that will enable them to improve quickly—before they are labeled as failures—without disrupting their regular classroom curriculum.

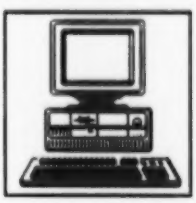
In Reading Recovery, teacher training begins with a year-long curriculum that integrates theory and practice and is characterized by intensive interaction with colleagues. Following the training year, teachers continue to develop professionally through ongoing interaction with their colleagues and instructors. Teachers in training teach

Components of Reading Recovery in North America



Program for Children

Children from the lowest 20% of their class receive intensive one-to-one instruction for 30 minutes daily. After 12-20 weeks, most attain an average or better reading level and require no further help.

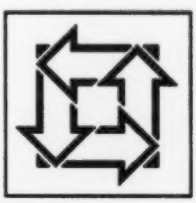


Research and Evaluation

Reading Recovery is a data-based intervention. Numerous individual studies support the program's success, and ongoing data collection for every child served in North America ensures program integrity.

Program for Educators

Reading Recovery educators participate in a full year of university-based training, followed by extensive continuing coaching at the local, regional and national levels.



Network Activities

Reading Recovery educators, administrators, and institutions form an early literacy network dedicated to making it possible for all children to become literate. Network activities include research, publications, and professional development.

children in front of their colleagues and get feedback on their practice. Thus they reflect on their professional task in the light of literacy theory and peer critique over an extended period of time. Reading Recovery teachers in training become literacy experts with keen observational skills and a repertoire of intervention strategies that can be tailored to meet the individual needs of at-risk students.

Reading Recovery as a System Intervention

As the scope of the instructional program suggests, Reading Recovery is not a teaching methodology that can be packaged and delivered through a set of materials, a workshop, or a series of courses. Reading Recovery is instead a "system-wide intervention that involves a network of education, communication, and collegiality designed to create a culture of learning that promotes literacy for high-risk children" (Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993, p. 2).

The program is adopted by entire school districts or groups of school districts that have made a long-term commitment to early literacy intervention. These Reading Recovery "sites" send an experienced teacher to one of 23 university "regional training centers" in North America for a year of full-time training. Following the training year, these trained "teacher leaders" return to their home district and work full-time teaching children, training teachers in Reading Recovery, and performing other duties related to the maintenance of a site.

The benefits of adopting Reading Recovery extend well beyond the success of individual at-risk students who complete the program. The results achieved by the teachers and children involved in Reading Recovery demonstrate for the entire district the impact that powerful teaching can have on low-progress children. Through interaction with Reading Recovery teachers, classroom teachers often begin to construct new theories about how children learn—theories that tend to carry over into classroom instruction.

Many districts that have adopted Reading Recovery have enjoyed the additional benefit of lower costs for special services. Reading Recovery has been shown to reduce the rate of retention, special education placements, and remediation beyond first grade. And no time is lost delivering the services that will effect these changes. At most sites, teachers undergo training outside of regular school hours, and they actually begin working with students as the training begins.

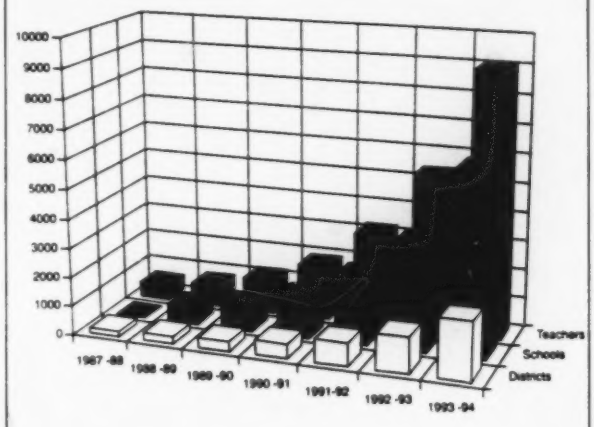
Reading Recovery as a Network of Educators and Institutions

Institutions and educators that have adopted Reading Recovery form an extensive network to support early literacy. In 1993-94, the Reading Recovery network included 5,657 schools, 1,890 district level sites, and 23 universities. The staffs of these institutions include almost 9,000 educators, including 8,344 classroom teachers, 400 teacher leaders, and 33 university faculty. These individuals and institutions work together to preserve the integrity of Reading Recovery and improve its effectiveness as an early intervention program in North America.

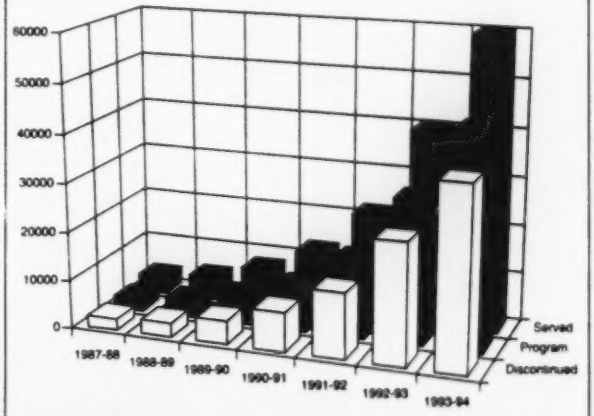
Program History

Reading Recovery was developed by New Zealand educator and psychologist Dr. Marie M. Clay, who

Reading Recovery Teachers, Schools, Districts, 1987-94



Reading Recovery Children, 1987-94



1993-94 figures are estimates. See page 7 for definitions of participants.

conducted observational research in the mid-1960s that enabled her to design techniques for detecting early reading difficulties of children. In the mid- 1970s, she developed Reading Recovery procedures with teachers, and tested the program in New Zealand. The success of this pilot program led to the nationwide adoption of Reading Recovery in New Zealand in the early 1980s.

The New Zealand program was monitored closely by a group of researchers at The Ohio State University who were looking for alternatives to traditional remedial reading programs. In 1984-85, funding was made available to implement Reading Recovery at The Ohio State University. Reading Recovery was implemented in the Columbus Public Schools the following year, and throughout Ohio in 1985-86.

In 1987, the U.S. Department of Education's National Diffusion Network (NDN) selected Reading Recovery as a developer/demonstrator project and provided funding to help disseminate the program to school districts in other states. Four educators from outside Ohio received training at The Ohio State University during the 1987-88 academic year. They returned to their home states the following year to begin serving children and training teachers.

In 1988, Reading Recovery expanded into Canada with a site at Scarborough, Ontario. In 1993-94, Reading Recovery sites operated in four Canadian provinces, 43 U.S. states, and the District of Columbia. An estimated 60,000 North American children will be served in the 1993-94 academic year by Reading Recovery educators.

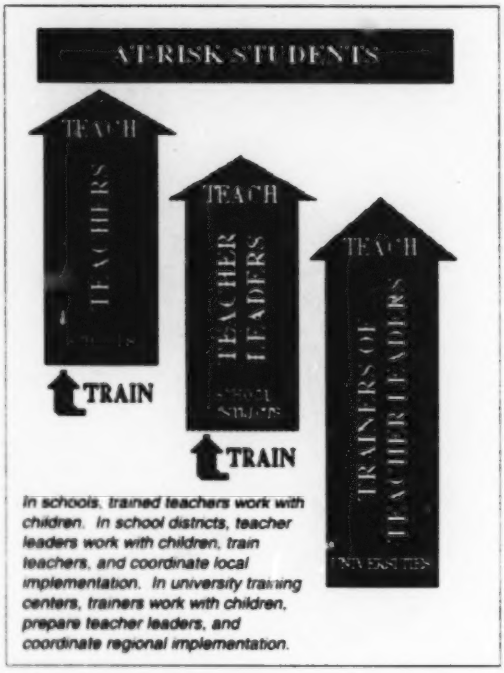
The Reading Recovery Lesson

In schools where Reading Recovery has been implemented, trained teachers use their judgment and a battery of six measures called the "Observational Survey" to select the at-risk children from the lowest-achieving children in their classrooms (see page 8 for a description of the Observation Survey). In addition to regular classroom reading instruction, these children receive one-to-one planned lessons for 30 minutes each day.

The first two weeks of each child's program are designed to develop the student's strengths. This period, referred to as "roaming the known," is comprised of a variety of literature-based activities that build the child's confidence and establish a rapport between teacher and child. The teacher uses this time to learn about the child's abilities and build a foundation for the individualized lessons that will follow.

The Reading Recovery Network in North America

Is a cooperative effort among institutions and educators . . .


AT-RISK STUDENTS
TEACH
TEACHERS
TRAIN
TEACH
TEACHER LEADERS
TRAIN
TEACH
TRAINERS OF TEACHER LEADERS
UNIVERSITIES
In schools, trained teachers work with children. In school districts, teacher leaders work with children, train teachers, and coordinate local implementation. In university training centers, trainers work with children, prepare teacher leaders, and coordinate regional implementation.

. . . that extends throughout North America

Canadian Sites: Scarborough, Ontario; Halifax, Nova Scotia; Saint John, New Brunswick; St. Stephan's, Newfoundland

Each lesson includes five components:

- Reading many known stories,
- Reading a story that was read once the day before,
- Writing a story,
- Working with a cut-up sentence, and
- Reading a new book that is read independently the next day.

During these holistic reading and writing activities, the teacher provides just enough support to help the child develop the effective strategies that independent readers use. In Reading Recovery, this level of teacher assistance is referred to as a "scaffold" that supports the process through which children learn to predict, confirm, and understand what they read. Writing opportunities are essential to develop strategies for hearing sounds in words, representing messages, and for monitoring and checking their own reading and writing.

Characteristics of Reading Recovery Lessons

•Individualized Instruction

Many early literacy programs try to move at-risk children along an artificial literacy continuum by teaching skills that somehow "add up" to good reading and writing. In contrast, Reading Recovery teachers carefully observe each student "as a reader and writer, with particular attention to what the child can do within the processes of reading and writing" (Clay, 1993, p. 7).

By working from the unique knowledge base of at-risk students in a one-to-one lesson format, Reading Recovery teachers move well beyond the traditional "skills and drills" approach associated with remedial reading programs. While the parts of the lesson are the same on most days, "the particular books read, the messages written, and interactions the teacher has with the child are individually crafted to meet the needs of the particular student. Thus each lesson and the path of progress for each child are different" (Lyons et al., 1993, p. 5).

•Working with Books and Stories

As often as possible, Reading Recovery students work in the context of an entire book or a complete story, rather than with unconnected sentences or word lists. By reading and writing continuous texts, children learn to use many different aspects of printed text—including letters, words, sentences, and pictures—to understand complete stories, just as successful readers do. Each lesson is organized "so that students, no matter how inexperienced they are with print, will be able to act like readers and writers. They learn to read fluently, using the phrasing

Thirty Minutes of Reading Recovery...

1. Reading Known Stories

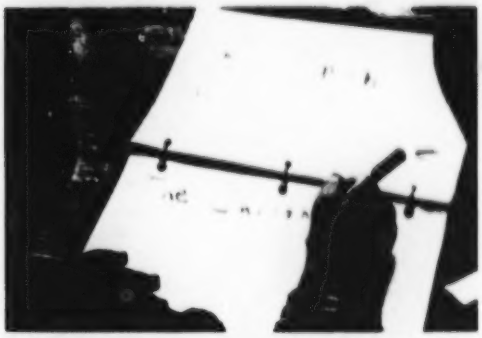
The child is able to orchestrate complex strategies, while the teacher supports the overall meaning of the story.

2. Reading a Story That Was Read Once the Day Before

The child reads yesterday's new book independently while the teacher notes "in-process" reading behaviors. The teacher records important information to be used in making instructional decisions, selecting teaching points to be used after the reading.

Photos courtesy of Diane E. DeFord. Text adopted from "Partners in Learning" (Lyons, Pinnell, and DeFord, 1993).

3. Writing a Story



The child composes a message about a book read or a personal experience. Through joint problem solving, the child and teacher work together to write the message. The child writes as independently as possible.

4. Working with a Cut-up Sentence

After writing the story, the sentence is written on a sentence strip and cut up. The child uses knowledge of the sentence to search and monitor for cues while reassembling the message.

5. Reading a New Book

The teacher introduces a new book, providing a framework for the meaning and language structures the child will meet. This book should offer a little bit more challenge than previous books read in the lesson, but be well within the child's reach.

that good readers use, to write messages, and to look at print" (Lyons et al., 1993, p. 5).

•Accelerated Learning

The goal of Reading Recovery is accelerated learning. Each child is expected to make faster than average progress so that he or she can catch up with other children in the class. The majority of Reading Recovery children typically reach an average reading level after 12-20 weeks of daily instruction. During this period, they continue to work in the regular classroom for all but 30 minutes each day.

•Work from strengths

Accelerated learning is possible because Reading Recovery teachers base their instruction on careful observation of what each child already knows about reading and writing. This approach creates efficiency, as the individualized instruction that follows "will work out these strengths and not waste time teaching anything already known" (Clay, 1993, p. 3).

•Independent Learning

The goal of Reading Recovery is not just to improve the reading and writing ability of at-risk children, but to help them learn how to continue improving on their own, so that later remediation is unnecessary.

With the assistance of their Reading Recovery teacher, children learn the strategies that good readers use to solve their reading problems "on the run" while reading real books. Reading Recovery instruction continues until the child has a self-extending system for literacy learning. Only then is the student "discontinued" from the program, providing an opportunity for another child. In 1992-93, Reading Recovery teachers provided instruction for 37,108 children in North America (an average of more than 13 children per full-time equivalent position). Some children were lost because of mobility and other factors, but of those who received a minimal number of lessons, 83% were successfully discontinued. The 17% who completed a full program but did not discontinue made substantial progress in reading and writing (see table at the bottom of page 11).

Professional Development in Reading Recovery

Accelerated learning for at-risk children is impossible without experienced, highly skilled teachers who are expert at observing children and making the moment-to-

moment decisions necessary to support independent learning. Developing expertise at this level requires substantially more than traditional professional development models can deliver. Rather than hearing about and then performing a set of teaching activities, Reading Recovery educators develop analytical skills and use them "to adjust and frame instruction for children" (Pinnell and McCarrier, 1993, p. 7). They do so through a combination of academic coursework, intensive interaction with colleagues, and ongoing work with children. As a result, their "interactions with students come out of a knowledge base that is established through observation and experience and constantly checked with evidence from children's responses" (Pinnell and McCarrier, p. 7).

Levels of Training

Training for Reading Recovery educators consists of one year of instruction, followed by extensive continuing contact, and is offered on three levels:

- *Teacher* training is master's level instruction, provided by Reading Recovery teacher leaders at approved district-level training sites, and prepares experienced classroom teachers to provide Reading Recovery for children in their schools. During the training year, teachers attend weekly classes, work with four children daily, and participate in area meetings with their instructor and colleagues.

- *Teacher leader* is postgraduate instruction, provided by trainers of teacher leaders at approved university regional training centers, and prepares qualified educators to teach children, train teachers, and operate a Reading Recovery training site. Teacher leaders in training spend one year in residency at a university regional training center. They complete a graduate-level curriculum, teach four Reading Recovery students daily, meet numerous field requirements, attend a number of professional development events, and prepare to implement the program in their home district.

- Instruction for *trainers of teacher leaders* is provided at the postgraduate level in North America by The Ohio State University and the University of Illinois in the United States and the Scarborough Campus of the University of Toronto in Canada. The one-year residency program prepares university faculty to teach children, provide instruction to teacher leaders in-training, and operate a regional training center.

After the Training Year

Following the training year, Reading Recovery educators at all levels hone their expertise through a variety of professional development activities, including regional meetings, site visits from instructors, conferences and workshops, and information updates. They also participate in the Reading Recovery network through data collection, committee work, participation in research projects, and other activities. ■

Behind the Glass

Extensive use is made of a one-way glass for training lessons, discussion and observation. Once each week during the training year, two teachers work individually with one of their children behind a one-way mirror while the rest of the teachers in training look on from the other side of the glass. Guided by the teacher leader conducting the class, the teachers observe the lessons and engage in intensive discussion of what they are watching. After the lessons, participants come together for a critique session.

Use of the one-way glass has been proven to be one of the most powerful components of staff development in Reading Recovery.

Does Reading Recovery Work?

Research and Data Collection

The success of Reading Recovery has been carefully documented since its inception in New Zealand. Pilot studies in New Zealand and the United States demonstrate that the program empowers children in the lowest 20% of their class with the strategies necessary to read at or above grade level in an average of fifteen weeks. Follow up studies in both countries further show that Reading Recovery children continue to read at an average or better level after receiving the intervention, reducing the need for long-term remediation. These results have been replicated regionally throughout North America, and they continue to be supported by the work of the National Data Evaluation Center, which tracks the progress of every Reading Recovery child in the U.S. and Canada.

As Reading Recovery has grown, the academic community has shown interest in various effects of the program. Researchers have compared Reading Recovery with other intervention programs, evaluated its cost-effectiveness, and studied its long-term effects on children. Others have explored such areas as the success of the teacher training component and the impact of the program on learning disabled students. This research, combined with the data collected each year on children who receive the intervention, provides answers to some of the most commonly asked questions about Reading Recovery.

How do discontinued Reading Recovery students compare to their peers at the end of first grade?

Reading Recovery students, all of whom begin first grade in the bottom 20% of their class, make considerable progress as a result of the intervention and effective classroom instruction.

The first end-of-year study on Reading Recovery in the United States (the Columbus Study, 1985-86) indicated that 73.5% of the 136 randomly assigned Reading Recovery students involved were discontinued (successfully released) from the program. Over 90% of the discontinued students were performing at or above average on four measures of reading ability at the end of first grade, and more than 70% were performing at or above average on three other measures of assessment. At the end of the year, the gain score of the Reading Recovery students on a nationally normed standardized test (CTBS) was 8.6.

Who are Reading Recovery Children?

In classrooms where Reading Recovery has been implemented, trained Reading Recovery teachers use their professional judgement and the results of a diagnostic tool (the Observation Survey) to identify children who are at risk of reading failure at the beginning of the academic year.

During the course of the year, teachers work with four of these at-risk students, in one-to-one sessions, for 30 minutes each day, beginning with the students who are at highest risk of failure. As students complete the program, which lasts 12-20 weeks, they are replaced with other at-risk classmates.

- ***Children Served****-children who have received at least one Reading Recovery lesson*
- ***Program Children****-children who have received 60 or more lessons or have been successfully discontinued*
- ***Discontinued Children****-children who are able to successfully read at or above the average level in their class and have been released from the program*
- ***Not Discontinued Children****-children who receive the intervention but do not reach an average reading level*

compared to a score of -2.4 earned by a similar group of randomly assigned first graders who had received another form of compensatory education.

The results of the early follow-up studies have been replicated in regional and local investigations. Researchers at Texas Women's University, for example, found that the 1,789 Reading Recovery students who were discontinued in Texas in 1991-92 performed at an average or better level on three measures of reading and writing ability at the end of their first-grade year. Individual Reading Recovery sites document similar results in their annual reports. In its 1993 report, for example, the Halifax, Canada, site reported that in the spring of 1990 their discontinued Reading Recovery students read, on average, at a text level of 15, compared with an average first grade band of 11-19. At the end of the school year in 1991, the discontinued Reading Recovery first graders were reading an average text level of 16, compared to an average band of 11-21, and in 1992, discontinued Reading Recovery students read at an average level of 16, compared to an average band of 15-22.

Selecting and Evaluating Reading Recovery Children

At the beginning of each academic year, children at risk of failing reading are selected for Reading Recovery using classroom teacher judgement and results from the Observation Survey. Looking across measures, teachers select children who are the lowest achievers first. The Observation Survey is also used to evaluate children who receive the intervention. The following six measures comprise this diagnostic tool:

1) ***Letter Identification:*** Children are asked to identify 54 different characters, including upper- and lower-case letters and conventional print for "a" and "g."

2) ***Word Test:*** Children are asked to read down a list of 20 words drawn from the words used most frequently in early reading material.

3) ***Concepts about Print:*** Children are asked to perform a variety of tasks during a book reading. These tasks, presented in a standard situation, check on significant concepts about printed language, such as directionality and concept of word.

4) ***Writing Vocabulary:*** Within a 10-minute period, children are asked to write all the words they know. The score on this test is the number of words spelled accurately.

5) ***Dictation Test:*** Testers read a sentence to the children, who write the words, indicating their ability to analyze the word for sounds.

6) ***Text Reading Level:*** Measures of Text Reading Level are obtained by constructing a gradient of text difficulty, then testing for the highest level read with accuracy of 90% or better. Levels are drawn from a basal reading system that is not part of Reading Recovery instruction.

Data collected at the national level supports regional and local findings. The Reading Recovery National Data Evaluation Center reported that in 1992-93, 83% (22,493) of all the children in North America who had received a complete Reading Recovery program were successfully discontinued. When compared to a random sample of classmates at the end of the year, 85% of these students scored at or above the average band range on Writing Vocabulary, 94% on Dictation, and 83% on Text Reading.

Are the gains made in Reading Recovery sustained over time?

Research indicates that Reading Recovery students not only become average or better readers in first grade, they develop a "self-extending" learning system, which enables them to continue learning at least as quickly as their peers in later grades.

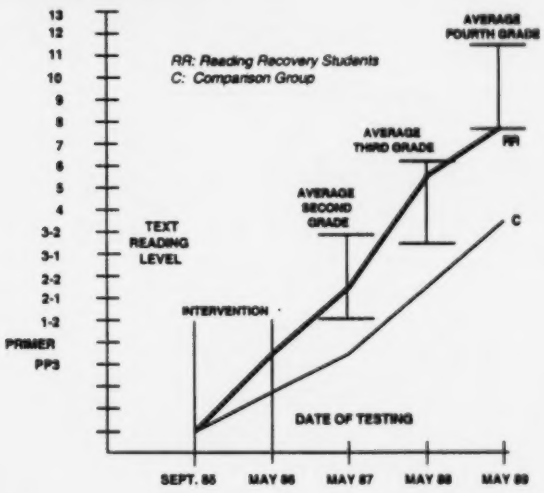
The follow-up studies to the Columbus Study (1987-89) showed that students served in Reading Recovery maintained progress in second, third, and fourth grade. (See Figure 1.) Fourth-grade Reading Recovery students demonstrated that they could accurately read text at the sixth-grade level or above. Additionally, these children proved to be excellent spellers, producing spellings closer to conventional spellings than their randomly selected peers on a fifth-grade-level spelling test.

Regional studies have produced similar results. In June of 1992, for instance, researchers at New York University tested 174 second-grade children in New York who had successfully completed Reading Recovery as first graders in 1990-91. Their performance on several measures was compared to that of a grade level random sample of 177 children. The following results highlight the strong residual effects of the program:

- Eighty-nine percent of the Reading Recovery children scored within or above the average band on text reading compared to 80% of the random sample, and 23% of the Reading Recovery children scored above the average band.

Figure 1: Columbus Follow Up Study

Gains made by students after completing Reading Recovery



• Ninety-six percent of the Reading Recovery children scored at grade two or above, compared to 89% of the random sample.

• At the end of second grade, the Reading Recovery children on average were able to read with at least 90% accuracy passages roughly equivalent to fifth-grade basal reading material.

The findings of regional and local investigations are supported by data collected through the National Data Evaluation Center. Each year, the center measures the progress of children who are discontinued from the program before April 1 through the end of the academic year on three measures of reading and writing ability. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine if Reading Recovery students do in fact continue to make progress with good classroom reading instruction after they have been discontinued from the program. The end-of-year text reading score for children discontinued before April 1 in 1993 was 19.45. (See Table 1 below.) This score is comparable to the text found in a grade-one basal reader.

Table 1: 1992-93 Data Summary

Progress of students discontinued before April 1

	Fall (N=10,366)	Exit (N=10,638)	Spring (N=10,282)
Writing Voc.	4.83	45.23	54.16
Dictation	7.52	34.57	35.28
Text Reading	0.68	13.27	19.45

How does Reading Recovery compare to other early intervention programs?

Large-scale and local investigations demonstrate that Reading Recovery is a particularly effective method for correcting the reading difficulties of at-risk children.

A state-wide study in Ohio was the first to compare Reading Recovery with other types of early intervention. The Chicago-based John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation commissioned researchers at The Ohio State University to compare Reading Recovery with four other instructional methods: Reading Success, an individual tutorial program similar to Reading Recovery, but taught by a teacher with an abbreviated training program; Direct Instructional Skills Plan, an individual tutorial taught without Reading Recovery techniques by experienced reading teachers; Reading-Writing group, a small-group intervention taught by trained Reading Recovery teachers; and a control group, which received a standard federally-funded remediation program.

The final report concluded that Reading Recovery was the only group for which the mean treatment effect was significant on all four measures: Text Reading Level, Dictation Assessment Task, Woodcock Reading Mastery, and Gates MacGinitie. Reading Recovery was also the only intervention program indicating lasting effects.

Specifically, the analysis showed that Reading Recovery children performed significantly better than children from an equivalent control group and the three other intervention programs. Reading Recovery was the only group that was better on all tests, showing long-term improvements in reading. At the end of the 70 days of instruction, Reading Recovery children were reading five levels ahead of children who received regular remedial reading lessons. Even though the control group continued to receive lessons for the rest of the year, Reading Recovery children were still three reading levels above the remedial group average when all children were tested the following autumn.

In 1991, investigators reported that Reading Recovery was more effective with first-grade readers than either conventional remedial techniques or Reading Recovery's indi-

vidual aspects used separately. The study attributed Reading Recovery's effectiveness to its unique combination of individual tutoring, extensive reading and writing during lessons, and a carefully structured program of thorough, ongoing teacher training. The researchers argued that educational policy makers need to recognize not only the power of early intervention with first-grade readers, but also the crucial importance of well-grounded, long-term teacher training and staff development.

Local investigations support the findings of the MacArthur study. In a recent report issued by the Scarborough, Ontario, site, for example, Reading Recovery students were compared with a group of students similarly at-risk, and a reference group comprised of average-performing first graders. The Reading Recovery students received daily Reading Recovery lessons plus regular classroom instruction. The comparison group received regular classroom instruction, plus whatever district-provided intervention services they qualified for (ESL, Special Education, Parent Volunteers, Private Tutor). The reference group received regular classroom instruction only.

Researchers reported that Reading Recovery students scored higher than comparison students on end-of-year measures, that the performance of Reading Recovery students improved at a faster rate than their "at-risk" peers who did not receive Reading Recovery, and that Reading Recovery students made significantly greater gains than both their average-achieving classmates and the comparison group based on results of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, the Metropolitan Achievement Test, a spelling assessment, and a miscue analysis.

Is Reading Recovery cost-effective?

Evidence indicates that Reading Recovery can reduce costs associated with at-risk students by lowering retention rates and thereby reducing the need for remediation and special education classifications.

Dyer (1992) found that, while Reading Recovery requires an initial and ongoing investment, its implementation is educationally sound and reduces the necessity of more commonly used means of intervention. The study concludes that school districts implementing the program will realize significant long-term cost savings through reductions in grade retentions, remedial Chapter 1 services, and special education placements—savings that can more than offset the short term costs of implementing and operating the program.

Researchers have also examined Reading Recovery's ability to reduce first-grade retentions, the need for further remediation, and the number of students classified as learning disabled, with positive results:

- Lyons (in press) found that the first-grade retention rate in an Ohio school district that had implemented Reading Recovery dropped from 4.3% in the three years before implementation to 2.9% four years after system-wide implementation.

- The same study showed that the district investigated reduced its enrollment in LD classrooms at the end of first grade from 32 students (1.8% of the first grade) in the three years before full implementation to 10 students .64% of the first grade) in three years after implementation.

- In their book *Partners in Learning*, Lyons, Pinnell, and DeFord document the experience of a district that reduced its first-grade retentions by 33 in five years following the

Reading Recovery and the National Diffusion Network

The National Diffusion Network (NDN) is a program of the United States Department of Education. In operation since 1974, NDN is a nationwide system established to help school systems improve through the adoption of locally developed, rigorously evaluated, exemplary educational programs. NDN selected Reading Recovery as a Developer/Demonstrator project in 1987 and provided funding to disseminate the program outside of Ohio. Since 1987, NDN has supported Reading Recovery research, national information dissemination, training, and administrative efforts on behalf of the national program.

A major component of the NDN/Reading Recovery program is the work of the Reading Recovery National Data Evaluation Center, housed at The Ohio State University. The Center collects data from program participants in North America each year, including pre- and post-intervention measures on every child who receives the intervention (approximately 60,000 children in 1993-94). In addition, the annual site reports made to the Center provide qualitative data on program implementation, in the form of responses to surveys for Reading Recovery educators, administrators, parents of Reading Recovery children, and the children themselves.

implementation of Reading Recovery, saving approximately $170,000 (Lyons et al., 1993, p. 27).

The impact of Reading Recovery extends beyond the students and teachers involved directly in the program. Researchers have also noted instances of districts where Chapter 1 teachers have become familiar with aspects of the program and have used their newly acquired practices to restructure Chapter 1 classes in ways that significantly reduce the need for Chapter 1 services beyond first grade (Lyons et al., 1993, p. 28).

Reading Recovery does require a substantial financial commitment. However, considering its capacity for reducing the need for more costly interventions beyond first grade, it is a sound investment.

What happens to the students who are not successfully discontinued from the Reading Recovery program?

Reading Recovery is not a panacea. Each year, a percentage of the students assigned to the program are not successfully discontinued. Some move from the district before their program is complete, while others are picked up at the end of the year and do not have time to complete their program. A small percentage of those who complete the program do not achieve average progress and require further special services. (See table 2 below.)

The progress of these children has been monitored by the National Diffusion Network, and the results are optimistic. In 1992-93, the National Data Evaluation Center reported that 4,563 (17%) of the 27,056 children who completed a Reading Recovery program were not successfully discontinued. These children nevertheless made substantial gains on measures of Writing Vocabulary, Dictation, and Text Reading.

What Program Participants Say

The effects of Reading Recovery extend far beyond the children served. In questionnaires administered at sites across North America, parents, administrators, and classroom teachers, as well as Reading Recovery teachers and students, discussed individual impacts of the program.

Parents' reactions to Reading Recovery

Parents across North America have expressed gratitude toward the Reading Recovery program for helping their children to become confident, competent readers. A parent from Chicago said, "My child is not scared to learn what he doesn't know because he can read and has a great deal of new confidence."

A Halifax parent saw the value of learning to read extend to other areas of her child's life: "It helped my child become more confident and secure. In primary he was a loner. As his reading improved his self-confidence improved, as did his circle of friends."

Many parents say the program has benefited them, as well as their children: "Our child benefited from the program, but so did we as parents," said a parent from Richardson, Texas. "We wanted to help her but didn't always know how. The teacher gave us lots of answers and lots of easy, positive hints to encourage reading." A Chicago parent said, "This has been a good year for my child, but not only for her— it makes me feel good that she can read and enjoys it."

Finally, parents expressed pleasure in seeing their children become excited, enthusiastic readers. An Arkansas parent wrote, "Every night before bed, he has just got to read to someone!" Another from South Dakota exclaimed, "There

Table 2: 1992-93 Reading Recovery Program Results

Comparison of Entry and Spring Scores for Reading Recovery Children

	Discontinued				Not Discontinued				Program			
	Fall		Spring		Fall		Spring		Fall		Spring	
	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N
Writing Voc.	4.6	18,891	52.4	22,040	2.8	4,453	34.3	4,202	4.2	23,344	49.5	26,242
Dictation	6.9	18,896	35	22,023	3.3	4,453	29.3	4,205	6.2	23,349	34.1	26,228
Text Reading	0.7	18,891	17.7	22,027	0.4	4,452	7.7	4,205	0.6	23,343	16.1	26,232

are no words to explain the expression on my child's face when she would complete her books! She loved it!"

Administrators' Reactions

Administrators from various sites shared positive reactions to Reading Recovery. Some expressed that the program's benefits far exceeded its expense. An administrator from East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, said, "I do not subscribe to the belief that it is too expensive. It is too expensive not to implement. We will find a way to expand."

Other administrators addressed the program's effects on their schools. A Jackson, Mississippi, administrator said, "The new Reading Recovery program has had a very effective, positive impact on our school. Teachers have said they wish they had the training and skills."

An administrator from Carrollton, Texas, wrote about the program's long-term effects: "The comprehension scores of third graders reflect an increase from past years. I attribute this to the early intervention of Reading Recovery."

Classroom Teachers' Reactions

Classroom teachers in Reading Recovery schools wrote about the improvements they saw in their children as a result of Reading Recovery. Many discussed the independence with which Reading Recovery children took on classroom tasks. A Chicago teacher wrote, "[Reading Recovery] students have demonstrated their ability to work successfully and independently. There is noticeable improvement in their reading skills."

"They can work more independently and have more confidence in themselves," said one Hartsville, South Carolina, teacher. "Their reading ability has increased! I have seen this program work with several of my students. BRAVO!"

Another Hartsville teacher discussed how Reading Recovery children could be distinguished from other first-graders: "I can tell a Reading Recovery child from other children. They check the picture, see if it sounds right and then check the word while they read. They have learned to self-monitor their work."

Finally, expressing satisfaction at the overall benefits of the program, a Halifax teacher wrote, "I have never seen children develop like this before. Teacher-centered, learner-centered classrooms, whatever, would never have accomplished what the Reading Recovery program has. These children would have been labeled 'having difficulty with reading' and continued that way."

Impact of the program on Reading Recovery Teachers and Teacher Leaders

Reading Recovery teachers from many different sites shared the impact that Reading Recovery training has had on their professional development. A Halifax teacher said, "Teaching for strategies and focusing on getting the student to be independent has been the greatest realization of how important this is. I now feel I have a firm understanding of the reading process." A veteran teacher from Plano, Texas, exclaimed, "This is by far the most valuable training I've had my whole teaching career— over 25 years!"

Reading Recovery teachers also felt empowered by their ability to help the lowest progressing students in more ways than one. A Chicago teacher said, "It builds such confidence in the children! It's wonderful to see the difference! Children gain a sense of security as they experience success. There is a noticeable change in the good feelings they have about themselves." A teacher leader from Maine discussed benefits extending beyond learning to read: "Besides the obvious impact of literacy, children served have higher self-esteem and are viewed more positively by peers and teachers."

Many teacher leaders discussed the district-wide impact of Reading Recovery. A teacher leader from New York said that, as a result of Reading Recovery, "Early childhood teachers are expressing interest in understanding and learning more about the reading process. Administrators are eager to find more ways of bringing knowledge into the classrooms to raise the level of classroom instruction." A South Carolina teacher leader noted the difference in her district's approach to low-progress children: "Very few children are retained, and the district's philosophy and mindset has changed toward our at-risk population."

Children's Reactions

Those children who have directly benefited from Reading Recovery instruction are anxious to share their new knowledge with everyone. A first-grader from Waco, Texas, said, "It's fun to take books home…so my mom will be happy I know how to read." Another Reading Recovery student from Irving discussed his new abilities: "I can pick out fourth-grade books from the library and I can read them. I can write to my grandmother in Iran."

Finally, a Reading Recovery student from Bangor, Maine shared important advice that he found helpful in learning to read: "Never, ever give up!" ■

How is Reading Recovery Implemented?

Reading Recovery is a system intervention that operates within entire school districts. Districts that have adopted the program according to established guidelines are designated as Reading Recovery sites. Each approved site is staffed by trained Reading Recovery teachers, one or more teacher leaders, and a site administrator. Reading Recovery teachers spend one half of each day working one-to-one with four children selected for the program and the rest of the day teaching, usually as a classroom or small-group teacher. Teacher leaders work with students, train teachers, provide continuing staff development for previously trained teachers, and participate in the Reading Recovery network. In 1993-94, approximately 300 Reading Recovery sites, consisting of 1,890 school districts, were operating in North America.

Implementing Reading Recovery at the District Level

It generally takes a school district or consortium of districts two years to implement a Reading Recovery site: one year to have a qualified member of its staff trained as a teacher leader at a Regional Training Center and a second year to establish a training site.

The Application Process

To become an approved training site, a school district or consortium begins by applying to a university regional training center to have a qualified member of its teaching staff trained as a teacher leader. (A list of regional training centers appears on page 15.) As part of the application process, prospective sites must secure financial support within the district, obtain the approval of the district superintendent, and reach an agreement with a local university or college to award graduate credit to the teachers who will be trained at the site.

The applying district or consortium also selects an administrator in the district to assume administrative responsibilities for Reading Recovery. This "site coordinator" oversees the preparation of the facility, manages the budget, negotiates contracts, and acts as administrative liaison with the Reading Recovery network.

The Training Year

Applicants are selected for the program in the spring, and the year-long residency program begins the following autumn. The program for teacher leaders includes five components:

1. A graduate-level curriculum consisting of a clinical practicum, a seminar in theory, and a supervision practicum;
2. The daily teaching of four Reading Recovery students;
3. Field requirements, including assisting with the training of Reading Recovery teachers, conducting colleague visits to observe other class members teaching a Reading Recovery lesson, and visiting other Reading Recovery sites;
4. Preparation for implementing Reading Recovery at their home sites;
5. Attendance at a number of professional development conferences, institutes, and meetings.

Qualifications for Educators

Applicants to training programs for Reading Recovery teachers, teacher leaders, and trainers of teacher leaders must have the following qualifications:

Teachers
- Successful teaching experience (recommended at least 3 years, preferably at primary levels)
- Evidence of flexibility and problem solving
- Willingness to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge
- Evidence of good interpersonal skills with colleagues

Teacher Leaders
- Master's Degree
- Successful teaching experience (recommended 5 years, preferably with 3 years of primary experience)
- Evidence of leadership within district, showing exceptional competence in working with both colleagues and administrators
- Nomination by administrative agency making a Reading Recovery commitment (school district, university, consortium)

Trainers of Teacher Leaders
- Doctoral degree in a related area
- Experience in teaching children
- Experience in teacher education
- Evidence of leadership

During the training year, teacher leaders work with their site coordinators to prepare the site for its first year of operation. They inform appropriate groups about the program, prepare the space where the teacher training classes will be held, order materials for teacher training, secure secretarial support for the program, and assist in the selection of appropriate teachers for the training class.

Implementation Year

Following their training year, teacher leaders and site coordinators work together to maintain the site. Teacher leaders train new teachers and visit previously trained teachers, conduct continuing contact sessions, collect data on children served, and prepare an annual site report. They also participate in a variety of continuing contact events and activities, including national conferences and training seminars, in order to further their own professional development.

Teacher Training at Reading Recovery Sites

To implement Reading Recovery at the classroom level in districts where the program has been adopted, qualified teachers enroll in a year-long academic course taught by a certified teacher leader. Through interactive clinical experiences and theoretical study guided by a teacher leader, teachers learn how to implement all components of a Reading Recovery lesson and to select teaching procedures appropriate for individual students.

Teachers in training continue to work full-time in their school district as they receive instruction in Reading Recovery procedures. The most common arrangement during the training year and subsequent years is for the teachers to spend half a day teaching Reading Recovery students and the other half performing other assigned duties. Teachers work with a minimum of four Reading Recovery students daily. Many teachers teach in the classroom the other half day or work with small groups of students in Chapter 1 programs.

Implementation Models

Implementation and institutionalization is a process of constructing communication networks, analyzing the priorities of the host system, and intentionally nurturing the feelings of success for all those involved. The variety of implementation models used throughout the U.S. reflect the efforts on the part of Reading Recovery professionals to accommodate and strengthen the existing vital processes of many diverse host districts.

Throughout the 43 states where Reading Recovery teachers and teacher leaders are working, they are employed in several configurations using their literacy skills as classroom teachers (1st, K, Sp. Ed., or other grades), teaching literacy groups (Chapter 1, Language Arts, or Early Literacy), providing staff development, serving as content specialists, or acting as part-time program administrators.

The reauthorization of Chapter 1, the emphasis on inclusion in Special Education initiatives, school reform and the maturing of Reading Recovery within complex host

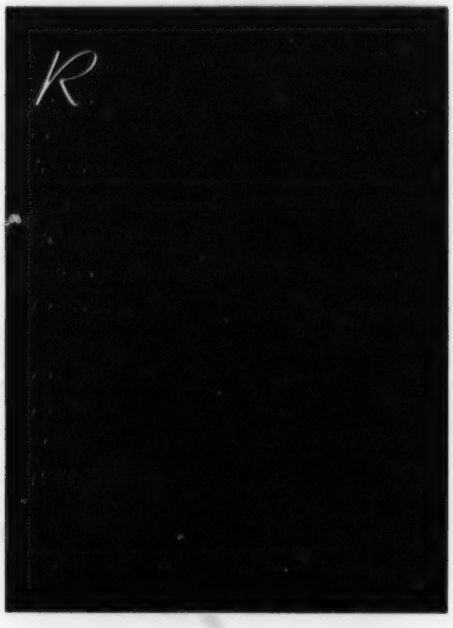
Why Implement Reading Recovery?

- The program not only serves high-risk children, but diminishes their numbers.
- The program is curriculum independent and provides equally for diverse populations.
- Reading Recovery delivers a high level of teacher training without removing teachers from their work.
- Reading Recovery provides built-in coaching and evaluation within the host district.
- Program evaluation, teacher evaluation, and training evaluation are directly tied to student performance.
- Reading Recovery involves cooperation between the university, state, and school levels of education.
- Reading Recovery teachers are accountable observers of children and consistent designers of curriculum.
- Reading Recovery has been pretested to national levels of implementation and institutionalization in one educational system.
- Reading Recovery requires few material resources.

systems promise more variations for stable and mutually beneficial implementation.

The Costs of Implementation

The costs of adopting Reading Recovery include the costs associated with the establishment of a site as well as the ongoing costs of site maintenance. Start up costs include tuition, materials, and living expenses for the teacher leader in training; the cost of building a one-way glass at the new site for teacher training; and a portion of the site coordinator's salary during the training year. Following the training year, new sites provide funding for teacher leader salaries, continuing contact for teacher leaders, site staff support, tuition for teacher training, and training materials. For specific information regarding costs, contact the regional training center in your area.



The Benefits of Implementation

Implementing Reading Recovery requires a substantial commitment on the part of the host district(s). The integrated nature of the instructional programs for children and educators, the use of quantitative data to measure the results of the intervention on all children served, the strong professional development model—these and the other features of the program simultaneously ensure its effectiveness and demand an exceptional level of support from participating individuals and institutions. In exchange for this support, Reading Recovery sites empower at-risk children to break free from the cycle of learning failure and empower teachers to become true change agents in their districts. ■

Reading Recovery Regional Training Centers

ONTARIO
Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery
University of Toronto
(416) 396-7003

ARIZONA
University of Arizona
(602) 621-1273

ARKANSAS
Arkansas Reading Recovery Program
University of Arkansas at Little Rock
(501) 569-3479

CALIFORNIA
CSU Fresno
(209) 278-6664
CSU at San Bernardino
(909) 880-5646
Saint Mary's College
(510) 631-4700

CONNECTICUT
University of Connecticut
(203) 486-4114

GEORGIA
Reading Recovery Program
Georgia State University
(404) 651-1216

ILLINOIS
National-Louis University
(312) 621-9650
University of Illinois
(217) 333-7213

INDIANA
Reading Recovery Program
Purdue University
(317) 494-9750

MAINE
Reading Recovery Center
University of Maine
(207) 581-2418

MASSACHUSETTS
Center for Reading Recovery
Lesley College
(617) 349-8424

MICHIGAN
Oakland University
(313) 370-3057
Michigan Reading Recovery Program
Western Michigan University
(616) 387-3534

MISSOURI
Southeast Missouri State University
(314) 651-2400

NEW YORK
New York University
(212) 998-5408

NORTH CAROLINA
Reading Recovery Program
UNC Wilmington
(919) 395-3382

OHIO
Reading Recovery Program
The Ohio State University
(614) 292-7807

OREGON
Western Reading Recvoery Program
Portland State University
(503) 725-4685

SOUTH CAROLINA
Reading Recovery Program
Clemson University
(803) 656-5103

TEXAS
Reading Recovery Program
Texas Woman's University
(817) 898-2443

WEST VIRGINIA
Reading Recovery Project
West Virginia Graduate College
(304) 766-2024

For more information about Reading Recovery, contact your nearest regional training center.

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What program participants say about Reading Recovery

"My daughter feels special, smarter—a whole new world has opened up for her since Reading Recovery."

-Parent from the Chicago Public Schools

"We believe those who are in the program may have been saved hours of necessary help up ahead. Those who have gone through previous years of Reading Recovery are shining examples of solid achievement. What a crime it would have been to deprive them of Reading Recovery."

-Administrator from Halifax , Nova Scotia

"This is the best thing that's happened in first grade since I started teaching."

-First-grade teacher from Fort Worth, TX

" I used to just throw my book down because it was too hard for me to read. But now I think I can read any book in the world!"

-Reading Recovery student from Garland, TX

"Reading Recovery has opened doors in my mind that will never be able to be shut! It's exciting to be part of a program that encourages teachers to do their best— a program that challenges and supports the teachers by creating a professional environment."

-Reading Recovery teacher from Louisiana